

**ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE
VETERANS ASSOCIATION
BYLAWS**

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ABSENTEE SHAWNEE TRIBE VETERANS ASSOCIATION

BYLAWS

PREAMBLE

We, as veterans of the United States Armed Forces, being ever mindful of the glorious tradition of our duty to uphold the Constitution of the United States of America, our responsibility to support a strong defense establishment, our interest in the welfare of our fellow service men and women in fortune or distress, And with reverence to God, Country and our departed comrades, unite to further the aims and objectives of The Absentee Shawnee Tribe Veterans Association.

ARTICLE I - NAME AND LOCATION

Section 1 (Name)

The name of this association shall be The Absentee Shawnee Tribe Veterans Association.

Section 2 (Location)

- a. The association mailing address shall be: 2025 South Gordon Cooper Drive, Shawnee, OK 74801*
- b. Additional association administrative offices may be maintained at a location to be determined by the Board of Directors.*

ARTICLE II - OBJECT

The object of this association , a nonprofit military veterans association, is to serve as a local non-political entity; support the aims and objectives of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe Veterans Association; promote and assist its own members both professionally and culturally; cultivate and maintain good relations with community leaders and active and reserve component members of the armed forces; foster patriotism, civic duty, fraternity, camaraderie and a sense of belonging for its members; honor and perpetuate the memory of retired and enlisted personnel; assist association members in fortune and distress; and uphold the ideals, principles and traditions of ASTVA.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 (Regular)

Any person retired and/or honorably discharged from an active or reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States, either for length of service or permanent medical disability, who is also a member or spouse of a member of The Absentee Shawnee Tribe, shall be eligible for regular membership. Active duty, Reserve and National Guard enlisted personnel are also eligible but must be a member and/or the spouse of a member of The Absentee Shawnee Tribe.

Section 2 (Associate)

The spouse of a member or the spouse of a deceased AST member, who were eligible for ASTVA membership at time of demise, shall be eligible for associate membership. Associate members shall enjoy the privileges of regular membership except the right to make motions or hold association office. However, an associate member may hold appointed office if chosen to do so by the Commander. A 2/3 vote of the membership may elevate any other member to regular membership status.

Section 3 (Honorary)

The association may bestow honorary associational membership upon any person (by two-thirds vote) who has rendered notable service to the association and who is not eligible for regular or associate membership. Unless withdrawn for cause, honorary membership shall be for the life of the member and no membership dues shall be assessed. The title of "honorary member" shall carry with it none of the obligations of the association but shall entitle the holder to all of the privileges of an associate member.

Section 4 (Guest)

Any person not otherwise eligible for regular, active military or associate membership may be granted guest membership by this association. Guest members may be veterans or non-veterans but in no instance shall the number of non-veterans be the majority of the total association membership. Guest members shall be non-voting association members only. Each guest member must be sponsored by a regular or associate member who shall assume responsibility for the guest member's conduct within the association. Guest membership renewals shall be on three month basis. All new guest member applicants shall be considered non-veterans unless DD Form 214 or other acceptable documents are presented to verify veteran status. The term "veteran" shall include active, reserve or retired officers and warrant officers, and enlisted personnel of the active and reserve components who are not otherwise eligible for membership. No membership dues shall be assessed to any guest member.

Section 5 (Proof of membership)

All members, regardless of membership type, shall be issued a membership card with Name, type of membership (regular, associate, honorary, etc...), CDIB number or spouses CDIB number, or an issued membership number for identification purposes.

Section 6 (Contact Information)

The name, address, and telephone number of each member shall be kept on file, in the office of the Coordinator of Veterans Operations, for contact purposes. This information shall not be published or released without the consent of that member. It is the responsibility of each individual to keep this file updated.

Section 7 (Rights and Privileges)

Only regular members shall have the right to make motions, vote, and hold association office—and none of these rights may be extended to any other category of membership. Guest members shall have only such association privileges as may from time-to-time be granted by the general membership.

Section 8 (Good Standing)

A member shall be considered in good standing except for reasons specified herein or in other association directives. A member shall not be expelled for reasons indicated in 'b' below without a fair hearing before the Association Board of Directors. When expulsion from the association is appropriate, such action must be ordered by the Board of Directors.

a. *Delinquent dues.*

b. *Acts that bring discredit to or are prejudicial to the best interests of this association or to The AST.*

Section 9 (Reinstatement)

A former association member who resigned while in good standing, or who forfeited membership due to nonpayment of dues, may rejoin the association as a new member or be reinstated with his original "join date" upon payment of all dues in arrears to the association. Expelled members may rejoin after one year—and upon acceptance by two-thirds vote of the Association Board of Directors.

ARTICLE IV – DUES, OBLIGATIONS AND FINANCE

Section 1 (Dues)

All members of the association, except guest and honorary members shall pay ASTVA dues in amounts prescribed in **Article IV, Section 1** of the ASTVA Bylaws. Additionally, regular and associate members shall pay association dues in the amount of **\$10.00** annually.

Section 2 (Obligations)

The association treasurer shall, on a timely basis, deposit all dues collected from regular and associate members to a bank account set up for The Absentee Shawnee Tribe Veterans Association. No dues shall be collected from honorary or guest members. The association shall also comply with all reporting requirements promulgated in ASTVA Standing Rules.

Section 3 (Finances)

The membership shall be the approving authority for the expenditure of association funds. The Treasurer shall verify all to the membership. Also, under the authority contained in **Article VII, Section 1**, the Board of Directors may approve up to **\$150.00** for any expense, without further approval, when funds are available and such action appears to be in the best interest of the association. Two or more members of the Board of Directors shall be authorized to sign checks drawn on association accounts and two signatures shall be required on each check or cash withdrawal. The authenticity of all bills for payment of goods and services shall be verified prior to the disbursement of association funds.

Section 4 (Fiscal Year)

The fiscal year for this association shall be the same as the calendar year (i.e. January 1 through December 31).

ARTICLE V – OFFICERS

Section 1 (Elected Officers)

Association officers will be elected annually by the membership and shall consist of a Commander and first and second Executive Officers. These officers shall perform the duties prescribed in these bylaws. These officers in accordance with **Article VII, Section 4**, are eligible to receive honorarium for attendance of one membership meeting per month.

Section 2 (Appointed Officers)

The Association Commander shall appoint a Chaplain and First Sergeant. No appointment may exceed the remaining term of the appointing authority. The Coordinator of Veterans Affairs shall serve as Secretary, Treasurer, and Historian.

Section 3 (Eligibility for Election)

Any regular association member in good standing shall be eligible for nomination and election to any association office providing these and all other requirements established and announced by the membership are met

Section 4 (Nomination And Election)

Officers shall be elected at the annual membership meeting each year during the month of December and shall assume office on the following January 1. At least thirty days prior to convening the annual meeting, the ASTVA members shall begin a search for nominees to fill elective offices. No nominee shall be placed on the election ballot without his or her consent. Nominations shall be written or spoken. Self nominations shall be submitted in writing. Each nominee shall be allowed to give a short discourse on his reason for seeking office. Elections shall be by secret ballot or by acclamation when there is only one nominee for an office.

Section 5 (Terms of Office)

Titled officers shall be elected for a period of one year, at the end of an officer's first term he/she shall have the option of running for re-election under their current title. No officer shall serve more than two years consecutively in the same office. However, any officer may announce their candidacy for any other at the time of nominations. The term of office shall begin on January 1, following the elections. Outgoing officers will surrender all association records and property to their successors.

Section 6 (Filling Vacancies)

A vacancy in the office of Commander shall be filled by the Executive Officer, a vacancy in the office of Executive Officer shall be filled by the Operations Officer for the unexpired term. All other vacancies (including Operations Officer) shall be filled by special election by the membership within 60 days unless the regular election is within 120 days thereafter. Any vacancies in appointed officer positions shall be filled by the commander. When there is no candidate for an elective office and the former occupant refuses to continue to serve in accordance with **Section 5**, the commander may appoint a qualified member to the vacant position, subject to ratification by the Board of Directors. The appointee shall have all of the rights and privileges of an elected member including the right to vote. The term of such officer, elected or appointed, shall be for the unexpired term of his predecessor.

Section 7 (Dual Offices)

No officer may hold more than one elective office within the association itself, but a association officer may hold any other office within the ASTVA structure unless restricted by the said Bylaws.

Section 8 (Removal of Officers)

The Membership may rescind an election and remove an elected officer. Appointed officers may be removed by the appointing authority, the Board of Directors or the association membership.

Section 9 (Resignation)

Any elected or appointed officer who is unable or unwilling to perform his duties (for any reason) may resign on the date specified in his verbal or written resignation without further action by the Board of Directors. The Board may also permit an officer to resign in lieu of removal from office.

Section 10 (Installation of Officers)

An installation ceremony is a formality which if not held or not attended by an elected or appointed officer does not affect the time at which office is assumed. If desired, a ceremony may be held before, after, or on the day office is assumed, which shall be January 1, each year. The following Oath of Office (while not mandatory) may be administered with or without a formal installation ceremony.

OATH OF OFFICE

I, (name), having been elected or appointed to the office of (state office), do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute said office to the best of my ability; that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies; that I will uphold the ideals and traditions of The Absentee Shawnee Tribe and The Absentee Shawnee Tribe Veterans Association; and that I will abide by all rules and regulations to which I am subject – So Help Me God.

ARTICLE VI – DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1 (Commander)

The Commander shall be the Chief Executive Officer and official spokesman for the association. He shall set the objectives, guide the policies and preside over all meetings of the Board of Directors and the membership (except when absent or when presiding might result in a conflict of interest). He shall remain impartial, but as a association member, is always entitled to vote by ballot, or at all other times when his vote will affect the outcome of a motion. If the commander takes part in debate, he must do so from the floor, in a membership meeting. If he is not in attendance, the provisions of **Article VIII, Section 5** shall apply. The Commander shall ensure that all administrative requirements of the association are accomplished expeditiously and in a dignified, honest and impartial manner and that the intent of **Article XI** is meticulously adhered to. He shall normally serve as ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee.

Section 2 (Executive Officer)

The Executive Officer shall assist the commander in the performance of his duties and shall fulfill such other duties as the commander may assign. In the temporary absence of the Commander, the Executive Officer shall serve in his stead. In the temporary absence of the Executive Officer, the Operations Officer shall serve in his place.

Section 3 (Coordinator of Veterans Operations)

The Coordinator of Veterans' Operations (a.k.a. Veterans Coordinator) is a full-time position, hired by the Tribal Executive Committee. The duties of this position are to ensure the association of the tribal veterans department and to assist the AST veterans. He shall serve as the Secretary, Treasure, and Historian of the Veterans Association. He shall not vote in membership meetings. This position shall only be terminated by the Tribal Executive Committee upon request of the Commander and the Board of Directors.

Section 4 (Chaplain)

The chaplain (an appointed officer), shall give a non-sectarian invocation and benediction at the opening and closing of each membership meeting and at such other times as may be appropriate. He shall offer assistance and condolence to the families of ill or deceased association members and shall officiate at community affairs on behalf of the association as appropriate.

Section 5 (First Sergeant)

The First Sergeant (an appointed officer), shall maintain a sign-in register at association membership meetings; verify voting eligibility of attendees when in doubt; maintain order in the meeting room; report the number of members present; assist the commander when called upon; and perform such other duties as may be assigned. He shall normally chair the Parades and Ceremonies Committee.

Section 6 (Other Appointments)

Other officers, when elected by the membership, may be appointed and shall have their duties, rights and privileges provided in writing and incorporated into these bylaws during the next amendment.

ARTICLE VII – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1 (Function)

Control and management of the association between membership meetings shall rest with the Board of Directors. The Board shall transact all business and have exclusive control over all other responsibilities unless restricted by these bylaws, actions of the membership or prohibited by law.

Section 2 (Composition, Voting Rights and Quorum)

The Board of Directors shall be composed of the elected officers named in **Article V, Section 1**. Neither absentee nor proxy voting will be permitted. A majority of the elected members shall constitute a quorum.

Section 3 (Board Meetings)

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held sufficiently in advance of each membership meeting to allow for preparation for that meeting. The date, time and place of Board Meetings shall be determined by the Board of Directors. Special Board Meetings shall be at the call of the commander or any two elected members of the Board of Directors.

Section 4 (Honorarium)

Elected officers shall be allocated an honorarium amount for official business conducted at monthly membership meetings. The honorarium amount is a set amount, not to be increased unless otherwise approved by the AST Executive Committee. The current amount is approved for only three elected officers and one meeting per month. In the case of any additional officers elected, the set honorarium amounts shall be split evenly among the elected officers. Only elected officers shall receive honorarium amounts. The officer shall be present at each meeting to receive pay. Officers shall not receive back pay for missed meetings. The Officer Sign-In Roster shall be submitted to the AST Finance department, by the next business day.

Section 5 (Standing Rules)

The Board of Directors may formulate, adopt and implement such Standing Rules as are necessary for the operation and administration of the association, but if such rules are not ratified by majority vote at the next membership meeting, they become null and void.

ARTICLE VIII – GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Section 1 (Date, Time, Place, and Calling of Meetings)

The date, time and place of special membership meetings shall be determined by the person(s) authorized to call such meeting (i.e., the commander or a majority of the elected members of the Board of Directors. Notice of meetings shall be as prescribed in **Section 3** below.

Section 2 (Frequency)

Unless prohibited by circumstances, a regular meeting of the membership shall be held, no less than once per month, on the second Wednesday of each month or subject to a date and time established by a vote of the majority of the membership.

The annual meeting, at which officers and directors for the forthcoming year are elected, will always be in the month of **December**, as specified in **Article V, Section 4**. Special meetings may be called at any time as prescribed in **Section 1**.

Section 3 (Notice of Meetings)

If notice of a special meeting is not given at a membership meeting, an official notice shall be mailed, telephoned, or published in a newsletter for delivery at least seven days prior to the next meeting date. In lieu thereof, notification of an emergency special meeting may be made by telephone or other means to all members who attended the last three regular meetings (if possible). Notice will be given at least 24 hours in advance and the purpose of the meeting will be stated.

Section 4 (Quorum)

A quorum at any association membership meeting shall be a majority of active members on roster and having voting rights. A quorum must be present prior to conducting any official business. If a quorum is not present, another meeting shall be scheduled within thirty days and all members notified.

Section 5 (Presiding Officer)

The association commander shall normally preside over all membership meetings. If the commander vacates the chair during a meeting, the Executive Officer, will assume the chair unless he has been, or intends to become involved in debate, which he must also do from the floor. If the commander and the executive officer must step aside, or if they are all absent, another member shall call the meeting to order and the membership shall elect a chairman pro tem to preside during that meeting only.

Section 6 (Order)

Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed in all meetings of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe Veterans Association.

Section 7 (Meals)

Meals for members and a guest shall be paid for by the association. Be it understood that meals are a privilege if associational funds are available. The meals shall be served at the first business meeting of each month.

Section 8 (Order of Business)

The Order of Business shall normally be as follows. The meeting will be called to order before any business is conducted and again after each recess. Except as shown in **Section 4**, a quorum must be present before any business is conducted:

- a. Call to Order.
- b. Invocation or prayer.
- c. Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.
- d. Pledge to the Absentee Shawnee Flag.
- e. Attendance.
- f. Introduction of New members and Guests.
- g. Reading and Approval of the previous minutes.
- h. Reports of Officers.
- i. Standing/Special Committee Reports/Special Speaker.
- j. Unfinished Business.

- k. New Business.
- l. Good of the Order.
- m. Special Announcements (next meeting date, etc.)
- n. Benediction.
- o. Adjournment.

ARTICLE IX – COMMITTEES

Section 1 (Standing Committees)

Standing committees shall consist of Activities and Entertainment, Bylaws and Rules, Finance, Membership and Parades and Ceremonies. Each committee shall normally consist of three or more members, excluding the commander, who shall be an ex-officio member of all standing committees except at meetings where **Article XI**, applies. The commander shall normally appoint the chairman of each committee and the chairman shall select all other members. All members shall serve terms corresponding to that of the commander.

Section 2 (Special Committees)

Special committees (which are automatically dissolved upon completion of the assigned task) shall be elected or appointed for a specific purpose. Written instructions shall normally be provided—which shall specify committee duties; when action is to be completed; and when a final report is to be made. The commander shall appoint special committees. The commander shall be an ex-officio member of all special committees except the Nominating Committee; except at meetings where **Article XI**, is applicable; or except when actions are under consideration that may be personally favorable or unfavorable to him—such as an award, or conduct that could lead to removal from office.

Section 3 (Committee Duties and Responsibilities)

A description of the duties and responsibilities of all standing committees and the special committees shall be as outlined in association rules or policy guides. Recurrent duties of other special committees such as Awards, etc., may also be specified in standing rules or policy guides, approved by the membership.

ARTICLE X – HONOR/COLOR GUARD

Section 1 (General)

Any member of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe Veterans may join the Honor/Color Guard as long as they meet the membership requirements called for in these bylaws and are able perform the physical duties that are called for to do so.

Section 2 (Physical Requirements for Color Guard)

Individuals must be able to lift fifty pounds and stand for long periods of time.

Section 3 (Physical Requirements for the Honor Guard)

Any member, in good standing may be a representative of the Honor Guard. The AST Honor Guard shall not be limited to those without physical disabilities.

Section 4 (Appearance/Grooming)

Grooming/Appearance:

- *Hair: Should be neat and clean.*

- Facial Hair: Men should be clean-shaven or have neatly groomed, mustaches, beards, and sideburns
- Jewelry: It is appropriate for individuals to limit exposure of jewelry during the rendering of funeral honors.
- Serviceability: Individuals should wear only those “uniform” items that are clean and replete with all buttons.

Section 5 (Associational Uniform)

The Honor/Color Guard shall wear proper dress attire displaying Absentee Shawnee Tribe Honor/Color Guard.

The official Absentee Shawnee Tribal Honor/Color Guard uniform is as follows:

- *The uniform comprises a Army dress blue coat, true-blue trousers, a white turndown-collar shirt and a black four-in-hand necktie.*
- **Shirt** - *The shirt is a commercial long-sleeved white button-up shirt with barrel or French cuffs and a standard turndown collar without buttons. The shirt is worn with a black tie.*
- **Headgear** - *The standard Army black beret, with the AST semble for the flash, is the official headgear for the AST honor/color guard. The beret consists of 100% wool knitted outer shell with a sheepskin sweatband and adjustable drawstring.*
- **Shoes** - *The standard shoes are the high gloss low-quarters.*

Section 6 (Utilization of the Guard)

Any appearance of the AST Honor/Color Guard is subject to approval by the Commander and Board of Directors or 2/3 vote of the membership. The Honor/Color Guard may be utilized for occasions such as military funeral honors, or other occasions, such as Native American dances, local parades or festivals, veteran functions, and other functions where the tribe should be represented. Care must be taken that the ceremony, event, or some part of the event is not supportive of a cause or activity that may shine a negative light on the Absentee Shawnee Tribe or the United States Military by association. Any event must not at any time conflict with **Articles III, Section 8, ‘b’ and Article XI.**

Section 7 (Who is eligible for Military Funeral Honors)

- *Military members on active duty or in the Selected Reserve.*
- *Former military members who served on active duty and departed under conditions other than dishonorable*
- *Former military members who completed at least one term of enlistment or period of initial obligated service in the Selected Reserve and departed under conditions other than dishonorable*
- *Former military members discharged from the Selected Reserve due to a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.*

Section 8 (Who is not eligible for MFH)

- *Any person separated from the Armed Forces under dishonorable conditions or whose character of service results in a bar to veteran’s benefits.*
- *Any person who was ordered to report to an induction station, but was not actually inducted into military service.*

- *Any person discharged from the Selected Reserve prior to completing one term of enlistment or period of initial obligated service for reasons other than a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.*
- *Any person convicted of a Federal or State capital crime sentenced to death or life imprisonment.*

ARTICLE XI – CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No member shall serve in any capacity (as a volunteer or as an employee) where a conflict of interest is apparent or perceived unless approved by two-thirds vote of the general membership.

ARTICLE XII – COLORS, LOGO AND SEAL

The official colors of this association shall be the same as The Absentee Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma—Red and Gold. The AST Logo shall be as specified in AST Standing Rules and shall not be altered on the inside of the outer ring.

ARTICLE XIII – LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

The Veterans Department of the Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma was established by the creation of a budget on December 22nd, of the year 2005, for the 2006 calendar year, by the Tribal Executive Committee, under Resolution number L-AS-05-54.

ARTICLE XIV – AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

Section 1 (Procedures)

These bylaws may be amended by two-thirds vote at any regular meeting if prior notice (containing the text or purport of the proposed change) has been given at a previous meeting, or is given at least 7 days prior to the meeting at which such amendment is to be considered.

Section 2 (Distribution)

After adoption by the membership, two copies of the original association bylaws and/or any subsequent amendments or revision kept in the possession of the Veterans Coordinator. One, copy will be brought to all future meetings and another copy will be filed at the main office. Any member wanting a copy of these approved bylaws may obtain one by request from the office of the Coordinator of veterans' affairs.

ARTICLE XV – DISSOLUTION

In the event of dissolution, all association assets (if any) shall be converted to cash. After all association debts have been paid, any remaining funds will given to a local charity, decided on by any remaining members. The colors, association charter and all membership and financial records will remain property of the Absentee Shawnee Tribe and will be disposed of at their discretion.

Adopted

(03/25/2006)

Amended

(02/26/2007)